

MINUTES
BELLE ISLE PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Thursday, June 18, 2015

Belle Isle Boat Club
Detroit, Michigan 48207

Present for Belle Isle Advisory Committee (BIPAC)

Michelle Hodges

Michael Curis

Ron Olson

Scott Pratt

Sommer Woods

Rev. Lonnie Peek Arrived at 9:28 a.m.

Alicia Bradford Arrived at 9:52 a.m.

Hodges stated that the meeting could not officially start until a forum is established.

Excused Absences

Bud Denker

Bryan Barnhill

Grand Prix Update

Charles Burns thanked the grand prix team and volunteers for their hard work and dedication. Post grand prix, roads opened on June 11, 2015. In the process of teardown and restoration of the park. Riverbank area had the most damage and last week the area was top soiled and hydro seeded. The area near the Casino was soiled and hydro seeded as well. Sunset sidewalk will be completed this week. All of the equipment will be removed by Friday in time for fireworks. Working on a tighter schedule for lead in for next year. Charles also mentioned more improvements to the park for next year. Next year's dates are June 3– June 5, 2016, (tentatively) **Hodges** mentioned the success of the Grand Premiere. Sold out-500 people. Raised 1.1 million dollars that will be put back into the park.

Red Bull Event Clarification

Olson asked Scott Pratt to give clarification about the event. **Scott** mentioned that the event is July 25, and 26, 2015. Four day load in/load out. The event is taking place in the Scott Fountain, Casino and Paddock Area. This event is scheduled as a use permit event. The rest of the park will be available for public use. This is a one year agreed upon event. **Olson** stated that Red Bull recently sponsored an X Games event and mentioned that this will be a worldwide public event that would bring notice to Belle Isle. **Olson** also mentioned that we are trying to be consistent with past events as the state has been at Belle Isle for just over one year. Red Bull is interested in urban community and likes to give back to the community.

Working on good balance and criteria when establishing what events take place on the park. Also mentioned that Grand Prix had an engineer take a look at the fountain. Lights were replaced.

Woods commented that she received a phone call this morning that an event has been displaced. Mottep has been on Belle Isle for 17 years. The event has been relocated to the Flynn Pavilion which will have them incur more expenses. **Sommer** would like to know how we find balance. Haven't heard back on prices, routes, etc. Feels that is totally unacceptable that the organization that is doing well for minority based community and them being displaced is totally unacceptable. Crowd clapped to her statement. Mottep has re-submitted the route and has not heard back. Sommer asked if Red Bull giving monies to MOTTEP for the relocation of their event. **Pratt** mentioned that they are in talks. **Sommer** asked for a follow-up on record.

Rev. Lonnie Peek, Jr would like to move to have Red Bull pick up any additional costs. **Olson** mentioned that his understanding was that Red Bull would enhance MOTTEP's event in a positive manner.

Rev. Lonnie Peek, Jr. mentioned that as the City is revitalized that we do not forget about those people that have weathered the storm.

Hodges called the meeting to order at 9:39 a.m.

Peek mentioned the tragic incident in South Carolina and called for a moment of silence for those who have suffered a loss.

Motion to approve minutes from May 21, 2015 meeting
Moved by Curis, seconded by Peek

Public Survey Update and next steps

Olson distributed attachments regarding the public survey. In 2010 a survey was done through the Conservancy (project for public spaced). **Olson** asked committee members that are interested in this topic; to join in the process.

Jody – Market Research, Survey Strategy
Three phase survey. Visitors of park, City residents and State
DNR Website will offer chances take the survey
Working on the questions
Completed in August, 2015

Belle Isle Boat Club Lease

Olson mentioned that the City of Detroit had a lease with the Boat Club for years and it needed to be renewed and continued. Detroit Rowing are custodians of the building with keeping it clean and safe. DNR wants it to continue but talked some of the language in the lease that offers alternatives as changes that may occur.

Grant to complete engineering review for Boat Club

Hodges introduced Julie Diamond – Detroit Rowing

Hodges mentioned that the Conservancy and DNR are not advocating for a hotel on the park as it relates to the article that was in the news recently.

Conservancy Update

Conservatory/Aquarium has a \$5 million dollar estimate to bring the two facilities up to code. The facilities have serious issues with heating, water and sewage. **Olson** said that the DNR and Conservancy are partnering on the cost of the short term fixes and will continue to collaborate on long term resolutions.

Strategic Planning Process - Cultural Campus

Steven White – Albert Kahn
Focusing Aquarium, Conservatory
Jones & Jones
Draft Park Analysis
Developing a program
Workshops

Hodges mentioned other strategic processes. Biederman Redevelopment was brought in to provide feedback. May 11th and 12th. Economic Plan, Capital improvement process, events next step in the process. Next week 880's initiative. References spaces are designed for ages 8 to 80 years old. Events are open to the public. Parks will be featured on Wed. 1:30p – 3:30 at the Belle Isle Casino. Looking for public input.

Next week – Wednesday, the Conservancy will be hosting three sessions. Information is on the website. www.belleisleconservancy.org

General Updates

Law Enforcement

Lieutenant Mike Shaw commander of the special enforcement section.
Have not had a major incident (criminal wise)
Increase Use of alcohols
Increase Use of marijuana
Fireworks – June 22. Island will open to vehicle traffic until 2:00 p.m.

Three mains goals

- Get you on
- Watch the event
- Get you off

About 3,600 vehicles are allowed in the park; then park will be closed.

Freeways will be shut down around 6 pm
Milliken will be closed – no fireworks viewing
Zero incidents during Grand Prix
Mentioned that the officers are community based and want park goers to stop and talk to the officers.

Staffing

Mike Terrell mentioned that Karis and Joe are doing interviews
Park Attendance – May 161,690 vehicles / 601,690 people
Karis and Joe are interviewing for 2 Park Rangers
10 STW jobs available 8:15 a.m.
General Office Assistant will be posted until June 22th 15.01 – 21.23
Mowing on the park. Contracted for ½ of the grass cutting. DNR staff will be cutting the other portions of the grass cutting. Five (5) on the mow crew.
Next year we hope to take over all of the mowing
Booth – Sunset
2nd Booth – Central
Vendors are now on the park in their perspective locations
DNR Planner Position – Accepted – July 19th
Michele mentioned that the Volunteer Coordinator interviews were yesterday
Detroit Revitalization – August start date
Financial Park Service – donating a person to Belle Isle

Public Survey

Infrastructure Issues and Updates

Olson mentioned that the water breaks are under control

Events

Healthy Kidz completed the restroom work at the golf course.
Youth Connection completed Oxbowl restroom last year
Greening of Detroit
MDOT

Events

Summer Saturday
Polish the Jewel
Pewabic Garden Park – June 5th
Fall Garden Party – Sept 23
Senior Power Days – Wednesdays July 8th – Dec 16th

Olson mentioned that Bert's will on the island soon, at Kids Row Concession
Kayaking is available

Alicia asked **Olson** were there any plans for the golf course. **Olson** stated that currently it is a disk golf with no other future plans for that land at this time.

Public Commentary

Cedric Johnson – Volunteer with the Detroit Grand Prix. Speaking for seniors in the East English community and Sheridan Place Apartments. Grateful for the relationship with the advisory board and grand prix.

Mary Ellen Howard – Grand Prix concerns, lack of access, sounds. No access to Scott Fountain. Cementing areas of the park. How long is the agreement with Penske?

Charlie Nordstrom – Representing abroad community. Advocating for full access to all areas of the park. Prohibiting closure of roads. Decision making for the park. Revenue and lease payment reinvested back into the park. Current contracts and requirements enforced

Sandra Novacek – Concerned about the nature of the park.

Diane Cheklich – Member of Detroit Rowing. Car Racing does not belong on Belle Isle. Referencing Grand Prix and Red Bull

Joanna Powin – Concerned about car racing on Belle Isle. Referencing Grand Prix and Red Bull.

Betty Roberts – Resident of Detroit. Did the Red Bull weigh in on the contract? Who signed the contract? Ron said that the contract has not been signed.

This Grand Prix it the best event ever. Has been to several over the country.

Agrees that the event that had to be moved because of Red Bull is wrong

Peter Forsythe – 37 year resident of Detroit. May 17th Free Press Article (Biederman)
Master Plan Quotes: www.belleisleconservancy.org

Carol Forsythe – 37 year resident of Detroit. Concerned about the event that has been displaced because of Red Bull. When will the Biederman plan be available? Will it be available to the public?

Michele mentioned that the plan will be available sometime in the fall.

Josh Medzekewski – addressed the experience with visit to Belle Isle Park last week. The Conservancy's position is they are not advocating for commercial business

Donald Green – DNR Stewardship issues. Grand Prix Concerns

Brian Malloy – Experience on Belle Isle – Vehicle Safety. 3 principles (blue, green, quiet)

Larry Roberts – Issues with the concrete on the park.

Richard Bell – Issues about lack of access to the park. Questions about where the booth will be permanently located on the park. Scott mentioned that there will be 2 booths on the park

Daily user of Belle Isle. Shorter load in and load out of Grand Prix. Ask the body to have a proposal to guarantee a shorter staging time for Grand Prix. Not in favor of Red Bull.

Leonard Grimith – Commend the committee for the conversation. What are the plans to make Belle Isle diverse?

Elizabeth Fendes – Thanks to Charles Burns. Red Bull did not send a representative. Penske has done a lot of good for the park but it's time to move on. Grand Prix is good just not on Belle Isle Park.

Debra Walker – Native Detroiter: Does not agree with racing on the Park. Encouraging diversity. Riverside Park: - Not in favor of the City of Detroit Mayor not wanting to have public engagement until the deal is completed. Encouraging public hearing.

Victoria Kata ski. Question to Charles regarding grand prix load in and load out. Damages that are done to the grass from parking stops them from having events even with restoration efforts

Committee member items

Peek made an observation they the group attended is the eyes and ears for the committee and welcome comments and concerns.

Curis mentioned that the Belle Isle Advisory Board is a separate body other than the Belle Isle Conservancy.

Sommer Woods talked about ways to get comments and make the meetings more available.

Curis mentioned that this board meets 12 times per year other than the required 6 times per year

Hodges mentioned that Curis was honored with the extinguished service award.

Other items

New Media – WWJ 950

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:36 a.m.